



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
St. Paul District

# Information Paper

## Environmental Protection: Mississippi River, Indian Slough, Buffalo Co., Wis.



*Indian Slough/Big Lake area in Pool 4 near Wabasha, Minnesota.*

### Contact

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### Location/Description

Part of the Corps' Environmental Management Program (EMP), the site is located in a backwater area downstream of Lake Pepin in pool 4 adjacent to Big Lake on the Wisconsin side of the Mississippi River navigation channel, across from Wabasha, Minnesota. The site lies within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The filling of Indian Slough and upper Big Lake with sediment from the main channel was degrading fish habitat.

The project involved construction of a partial closure structure in Indian Slough, dredging a 3,000-foot-long by 125-foot-side channel in Big Lake Bay to create depths greater than 4 feet for fish habitat, using the dredged material to revegetate a channel maintenance placement site, and constructing two rock riffle-pool areas 4 feet deep in the slough and placing log snags along the shoreline of the slough to enhance fish and mussel habitat.

The project preserves 120 acres of aquatic habitat, created 11 acres of deepwater fish habitat, and maintains adequate dissolved oxygen levels in the backwater. Secondary benefits of the project include fish habitat enhancement of about 500 acres in the Big Lake backwater area.

### Status

Construction of the project began in 1993 and was completed in June 1994. The project has been transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for operation and maintenance.

### Authority

The Indian Slough Habitat Project was planned under the authority of the Upper Mississippi River System - Environmental Management Program (EMP) and constructed in accordance with a Definite Project Report dated September 1990. The EMP was authorized by Section 1103 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, and reauthorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 1999.

The project was planned and designed as part of a cooperative effort between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and local interests.

### Fiscal

Project design and construction costs were 100 percent Federal because the project is located on national wildlife refuge lands. Operation and maintenance costs are 100 percent Federal (a responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

Federal Cost	\$988,000
Non-Federal Cost	\$0
Total Cost	\$988,000